

## WASHINGTON MERRY-GO-ROUND

# Soviets Foment Arab Strife

(Editor's note—While Drew Pearson is on a newsgathering trip, his associate, Jack Anderson, writes his column.)

WASHINGTON, May 2.—It was intended only for the eyes of American diplomats, but the State Department has prepared a confidential report on "Communist penetration in the Middle East."

This bluntly charges that Arab Reds are acting "on orders from Moscow" to foment riots and disturbances. Their aim, claims the report, is "to effect anti-western alliances."

The report has important bearing on trouble in Jordan and the question of whether the Eisenhower Doctrine against Communist penetration of the Near East should be invoked.

"Soviet clandestine operations in the Middle East are concentrated mainly in Syria and Lebanon," the secret report states, "where a network of Communist espionage, subversion, and other 'fifth column' activities extends from Damascus and Beirut to Aleppo, Homs-Hama, and other centers in the Eastern Mediterranean area."

"The most noted Communist in the Middle East is Khalid

### DREW PEARSON

Bikdash, a Moscow-trained Syrian Kurd, who became the first acknowledged Communist to be elected to the Syrian Parliament... (but) the main center of Soviet undercover subversive activities in the Middle East is the Beirut headquarters of the Lebanese Communist Party.

"The LCP Central Committee has been headed by Mustafa al-Ariss, but the Communist parties of Syria and Lebanon are governed by a joint central command under Khalid Bikdash. However, Soviet intrigues and subversion in the Middle East are directed by a secret MVD official holding a Soviet diplomatic post in Beirut. This comes from Turkish sources."

**SUMMARIZING** Red strategy in the Middle East, the report claims:

"Soviet long-range strategy in the Middle East is governed by the following considerations: (1) expansion of Soviet influence in the eastern Mediterranean region; (2) diversion of Arabian oil resources from the west to the Soviet bloc; (3)

winning Muslims to tolerance of or active sympathy with Communism, to open the way for ultimate communization of the entire region."

### Israeli Attack?

Central Intelligence has received terse word from the Middle East that Israel may attack Egypt again this month. The Israelis are alarmed over the Egyptian military build-up, particularly the arrival of 150 MIG-17 fighters with Russian pilots to fly them.

Israeli leaders have about decided to hit again before they get hit, warn intelligence reports.

### Soviet Subs

The Navy has confirmed to Congressmen this column's report that Soviet subs are lying off the Florida coast, spying on our guided-missile tests... Ambassador to Nicaragua, Tom Whelan, sometimes criticized for not using the striped pants approach, has survived the diplomatic shake-up. He persuaded Texas oil millionaire Clint Murchison to invest in Nicaragua (everything from an insecticide plant to a plush hotel.)

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